<u>IN THE CLAIMS</u>:

1. (Currently Amended)   A teleconferencing system comprising:

       - at least one telecommunication system;

       - at least a first and a second subscriber terminal connected to said

telecommunication system;

       - an electronic computing means connected to said at least one

telecommunication system, and

       - a means for providing an availability signal associated with each of said first

and said second subscriber terminal,

said electronic computing means being provided with a conference initiating program,

said availability signal being accessible to said electronic computing means, said

telecommunication system being capable of cooperating with said conference initiating

program for initiating a conference between said subscriber terminals, and said

conference initiating program being designed:

to process availability signals of a requesting terminal, and of any and all requested

terminals, whenever a conference call is requested by any of said subscriber terminals;

to initiate a conference call as soon as said availability signals indicate availability of

said requesting terminal and of said requested terminals;

to suspend said conference call when one or more of said requested terminals does not

respond <u>after said availability signals indicate availability of said requesting terminal</u>

<u>and of said requested terminals;</u>and

to initiate said conference call again after a delay when said one or more of said requested terminals does not respond.

2. (previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein said conference initiating program is designed to:

- process availability signals of a requesting terminal and of any and all requested terminals in response to receipt of a signal indicating that a specified event has occurred; and

- to initiate a conference call as soon as said availability signals indicate availability of said requesting terminal and of said requested terminals.

3. (original) The system of claim 2, wherein said terminals are connected to different telecommunication systems and wherein said conference initiating program is designed to:

- process availability signals of a requesting terminal and of any and all requested terminals whenever a conference call is requested by any of said subscriber terminals; and

- to initiate a conference call as soon as said availability signals indicate availability of said requesting terminal and of said requested terminals,
said requesting terminal and said requested terminals being connected to the same telecommunication system.

4. (original) The system of claim 1, comprising a gateway between any two telecommunication systems for mutual interconnection, and wherein said subscriber terminals are connected to different but inter-operable telecommunication systems.

5. (original) The system of claim 4, wherein said conference initiating program is designed to:

- process availability signals of a requesting terminal, and of any and all requested terminals, whenever a conference call is requested by any of said subscriber terminals; and

- to initiate a conference call as soon as said availability signals indicate availability of said requesting terminal and of said requested terminals,

said requesting terminal and said requested terminals being connected to telecommunication systems that are connected by said gateway.

6. (Currently Amended) A teleconferencing method for use in at least one telecommunication system connected with at least a first and a second subscriber terminal; said at least one telecommunication system being connected to an electronic computing means provided with a conference initiating program; each of said subscriber terminals being associated with an availability signal; wherein a conference call initiated by one of said first and said second subscriber terminal is relayed to any other subscriber terminal as soon as said availability signal indicates availability of any and all of said subscriber terminals;

said conference call is suspended when one or more of said requested terminals does not respond after said availability signals indicate availability of said requesting terminal and of said requested terminals; and

said conference call is initiated again after a delay when said one or more of said requested terminals does not respond.

7. (original)   The method of claim 6, for use in a plurality of telecommunication systems and with a multiplicity of subscriber terminals wherein at least one of said telecommunication systems is capable of transmitting data streams of differing media, e.g. sound and video.

8. (Currently Amended)   A conference initiating program for use in a teleconferencing system comprising:

- at least one telecommunication system;

- at least a first and a second subscriber terminal connected to said system;

- an electronic computing means connected to said at least one telecommunication system;

said electronic computing means being provided with said conference initiating program;

- means for providing an availability signal associated with each of said first and said second subscriber terminal;

said availability signal being accessible to said electronic computing means;

said conference initiating program being accessible to said subscriber terminals and being designed:

to process availability signals of a requesting terminal, and of any and all requested terminals whenever a conference call is requested by any of said subscriber terminals;

to initiate a conference call as soon as said availability signals indicate availability of said requesting terminal and of said requested terminals;

to suspend said conference call when one or more of said requested terminals does not respond <u>after said availability signals indicate availability of said requesting terminal and of said requested terminals;</u> and

to initiate again said conference call after a delay when said one or more of said requested terminals does not respond.

9. (original) The program of claim 8, said program being designed for accessibility to a plurality of differing telecommunication systems and a multiplicity of subscriber terminals wherein at least one of said telecommunication systems is capable of transmitting data streams of differing media, e.g. sound and video.

10. (original) An article of manufacture comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied therein for causing teleconferencing, the computer readable program code means in said article of manufacture comprising computer readable program code means for causing a computer to effect the steps of claim 6.

11. (Currently amended) A teleconferencing system comprising:
- at least one telecommunication system;
- at least a first and a second subscriber terminal connected to said telecommunication system;
- an electronic computing means connected to said at least one telecommunication system, and
- a means for providing an availability signal associated with each of said first and said second subscriber terminal,

said electronic computing means being provided with a conference initiating program, said availability signal being accessible to said electronic computing means, said telecommunication system being capable of cooperating with said conference initiating

program for initiating a conference between said subscriber terminals, and said

conference initiating program being designed:

to process availability signals of a requesting terminal, and of any and all requested

terminals in response to receipt of a signal indicating that a specified event has occurred,

~~and~~

to initiate a conference call as soon as said availability signals indicate availability of

said requesting terminal and of said requested terminals;

to suspend said conference call when one or more of said requested terminals does not

respond after said availability signals indicate availability of said requesting terminal

and of said requested terminals; and

to initiate again said conference call after a delay when said one or more of said

requested terminals does not respond.

12.   (previously presented) A method according to claim 6, further comprising a step

of:

 processing availability signals of a requesting terminal and of any and all requested

terminals in response to receipt of a signal indicating that a specified event has occurred.

13.   (previously presented) A program according to claim 8, further being designed

to process availability signals of a requesting terminal and of any and all requested

terminals in response to receipt of a signal indicating that a specified event has occurred.